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More peril for Trump in pending probes than NY: AP-NORC poll

By JILL COLVIN and
EMILY SWANSON

Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Former President Donald Trump has emerged largely unscathed politically from his New York indictment. But a new poll suggests that investigations in Georgia and Washington could prove more problematic.

Only 4 in 10 U.S. adults believe Trump acted illegally in New York, where he has been charged in connection with hush money payments made to women who alleged sexual encounters, according to the new poll by The Associated Press-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research. More — about half — believe he broke the law in Georgia, where he is under investigation for interfering in the 2020 election vote count.

The poll finds about half feel similarly about his role in the storming of the U.S. Capitol on Jan. 6, 2021, and his handling of classified documents found at Mar-a-Lago, which are both under investigation by the Justice Department.

The findings suggest potential future charges in those cases against Trump may resonate more deeply with the American public than his alleged cover-up of payments to porn actor Stormy Daniels and other women at the height of the 2016 campaign — charges that nearly 6 in 10 adults believe were politically motivated. While the case drew intense media coverage and made Trump the first former president in U.S. history to be charged criminally, legal experts have long argued that the other investigations pose far more serious potential risk.

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Former President Donald Trump leaves Trump Tower in New York on Tuesday, April 4, 2023.

Associated Press

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More peril for Trump in pending probes than NY: AP-NORC poll



Former President Donald Trump sits at the defense table with his legal team in a Manhattan court, April 4, 2023, in New York. Associated Press

Continued from Front

The Georgia case, in particular, concerns even some longtime Trump supporters. "I just feel like he kind of got himself involved in something that he shouldn't have. I don't know if it's necessarily illegal, but just let the votes be the votes," said Stephanie Trinidad, a Republican who lives in Dracut, Massachusetts, and voted for Trump in 2016 and 2020. The poll offers further evidence that Trump has faced limited political fallout from the indictment, which instead proved a massive fundraising boon. His campaign has raised more than \$15 million since news of the indictment broke — much from new donors — and he has rolled out a list of new endorsements. While the poll finds only 30% of Americans, including 55% of Republicans, say they want Trump to run for president again in 2024, those numbers have changed little since an AP-

NORC poll conducted in January. Trump's favorability has also held constant: 34% of U.S. adults overall and 68% of Republicans say they have a favorable opinion of him, similar to three months ago. Still, Trump, who remains the undisputed front-runner for the Republican nomination, would face substantial headwinds if he wins the Republican nomination. About half of Americans — 53% — say they will definitely not support him in the general election if he emerges as the GOP nominee, according to the poll. When it comes to the New York case, the poll found 41% say Trump did something illegal. Thirty-three percent say they believe he did something unethical but not illegal. Only a small minority — 14% — say he did nothing wrong. A majority of Americans — 57% — say Trump's indictment in the case was justified, the poll shows, but just as many say they believe the charges were politically

motivated. They include Gino Lentine, a loyal Trump supporter from Akron, Ohio, who said he doesn't "give two hoots" about the case. "If you're going to lock up every guy in the world — and every girl — who cheated on their spouse and paid them off, you're going to have to lock up the whole country," said Lentine, 57. "In my book, he's innocent — well, maybe guilty, but who cares?" he said. "Who cares if he spent \$100,000? Nobody cares. It's costing me \$100,000 to put gas in my car. Come on." The poll's New York findings represents a rosier picture for Trump than in Georgia, where Fulton County District Attorney Fani Willis has been investigating whether Trump and his allies illegally meddled in Georgia's 2020 presidential election. The foreperson of a special grand jury convened to hear evidence in the case said the panel recommended that Willis indict over a dozen people,

including possibly Trump, who was recorded asking state election officials to "find 11,780 votes" to help him win. It is now up to Willis to decide whether to pursue charges. But already in the Georgia case, the poll finds 53% say they think Trump broke the law. Twelve percent say he did something they consider unethical but not illegal, while 17% said he did nothing wrong. Trinidad, 36, said she sees the flurry of investigations Trump faces as a politically motivated distraction aimed at keeping him from winning the White House again. But when it comes to the Georgia case, she said, "I just feel it is a little bit different." "Once you start getting into our voting system and counts, then I start to get a little wary because that's literally our right as an American citizen. So once you start to fiddle with that, it sort of becomes a little bit more of an issue for me, personally," she said, adding that she

hasn't thought much yet about whom she plans to support in 2024. In the federal cases, about half of Americans — 47% — believe Trump acted illegally in his handling of classified documents, while 49% say he broke the law in connection with the Jan. 6 Capitol riot. About 2 in 10 say they think he did something unethical but not illegal in those cases, and close to that many say they think he did nothing wrong. The poll makes clear that Americans' views of the investigations are deeply partisan. In the Georgia case, 86% of Democrats but just 22% of Republicans say they think Trump did something illegal. In the New York case, 68% of Democrats and 13% of Republicans say they think he broke the law. Meanwhile, 9 in 10 Democrats but only a quarter of Republicans say they think the indictment in the New York case was justified. Nearly 9 in 10 Republicans — but only about a third of Democrats — say they think the charges were politically motivated. That includes Nicole Sawyer, a registered independent from Middletown, Pennsylvania, who typically backs Democrats and praises President Joe Biden. While she believes Trump has done "a lot of immoral things" that are worth investigating, she also sees the probes as driven by politics. "I think people are sort of just throwing stuff at him, anything they can," said Sawyer, 45, who views the investigations as a distraction from more important issues, like Social Security and health care. Those issues, she said, are "kind of being overshadowed with all this drama with Trump." Still, Sawyer said that if Trump is found guilty, "he doesn't deserve to be our president." "I think that kids should be able to look up to the president of America and not have a whole bunch of drama overshadowing the real things that need to be taken care of," she said. □

IRS agent alleges Hunter Biden probe is being mishandled

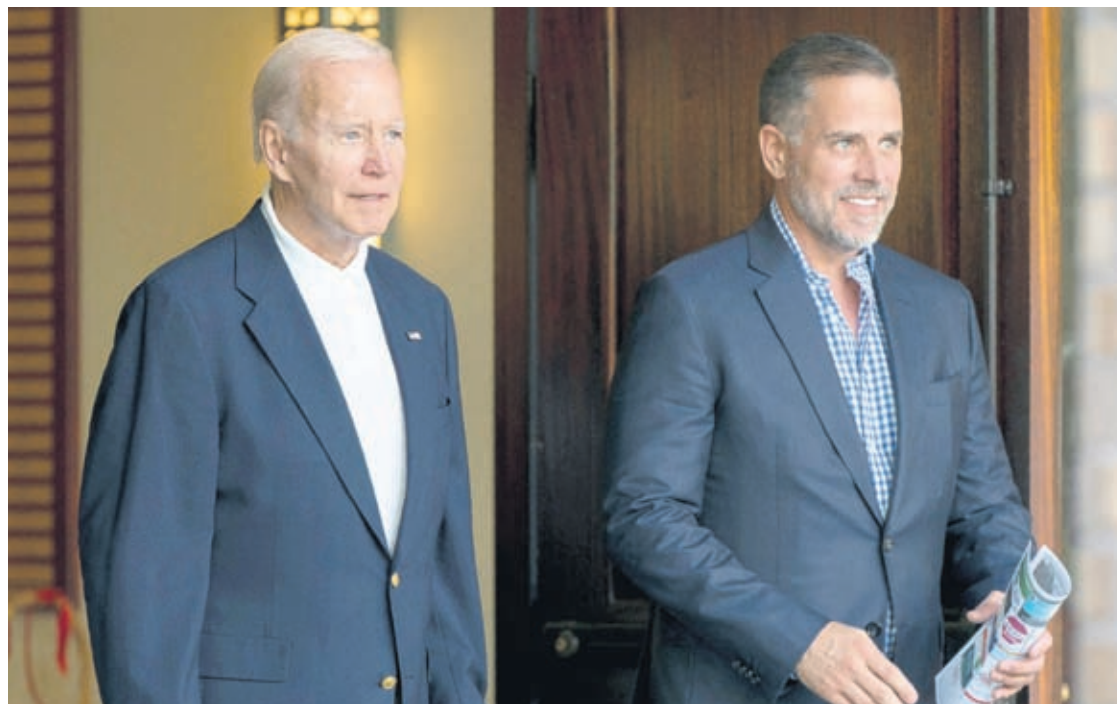
By FARNOUSH AMIRI

Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — An IRS special agent is seeking whistleblower protection to disclose information about what the agent alleges is mishandling of an investigation into President Joe Biden's son, Hunter Biden, according to a letter sent to members of Congress.

Mark Lytle, the attorney for the IRS whistleblower, wrote to lawmakers Wednesday that his client has information about a "failure to mitigate clear conflicts of interest in the ultimate disposition" of a criminal investigation related to the younger Biden's taxes and whether he made a false statement in connection with a gun purchase.

"Despite serious risks of retaliation, my client is offering to provide you with information necessary to exercise your constitutional oversight function and wishes to make the disclosures in a nonpartisan manner to the leadership of the relevant committees on both sides of the political aisle," Lytle said in a letter, obtained by The Associated Press, that was sent to the chairmen and ranking members of several House and Senate committees.



President Joe Biden and his son Hunter Biden leave Holy Spirit Catholic Church in Johns Island, S.C., after attending a Mass on Aug. 13, 2022.

The letter states that the supervisory special agent previously disclosed the information they are seeking to share with Congress internally with the IRS and a watchdog for the Justice Department. Lytle added that his client is able to contradict sworn testimony to lawmakers "by a senior political appointee." That appointee is not named. The special agent also wants to disclose "examples of preferential treatment and politics improperly

infecting decisions and protocols that would normally be followed by career law enforcement professionals in similar circumstances if the subject were not politically connected," the lawyer added.

"The president respects the rule of law and the independence of the Department of Justice," White House press secretary Karine Jean-Pierre said during a briefing Thursday. The Justice Department declined to comment. Hunter

Biden's legal team had no immediate comment. A request for comment from the IRS was not immediately returned.

Hunter Biden's taxes and foreign business work have been under federal investigation by a federal grand jury in Delaware since at least 2018. So far no charges have been filed. Additionally, his membership on the board of a Ukrainian energy company and his efforts to strike deals in China have long raised ques-

tions by Republicans about whether he traded on his father's public service.

Joe Biden has said he has never spoken to his son about foreign business. There are no indications that the federal investigation involves the president. Attorney General Merrick Garland said in a congressional hearing last month that he won't interfere with the department's investigation.

He told the Senate Judiciary Committee that he has left the matter in the hands of U.S. Attorney David Weiss, the top federal prosecutor in Delaware, who would be empowered to expand his investigation outside the state if needed.

"He has been advised he is not to be denied anything he needs," Garland said. "I have not heard anything from that office to suggest that they are not able to do everything the U.S. Attorney wants to do."

The whistleblower letter, first reported by The Wall Street Journal, comes as House Republicans have opened their own investigations into nearly every facet of Hunter Biden's business dealings, including examining foreign payments and other aspects of his finances. □

Associated Press

U.S. traffic deaths drop slightly in 2022 but still a 'crisis'

DETROIT (AP) — The number of people killed on U.S. roadways decreased slightly last year, but government officials said the 42,795 people who died is still a national crisis.

Estimates by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration showed that the number of fatalities dropped 0.3% from the 42,939 killed in 2021. Traffic deaths declined slightly in the fourth quarter, the third straight quarterly drop.

But they're still close to 2021 numbers, which were the highest in 16 years.

"We continue to face a national crisis of traffic deaths on our roadways,

and everyone has a role to play in reversing the rise that we experienced in recent years," Transportation Secretary Pete Buttigieg, whose department includes NHTSA, said in a statement Thursday.

The department has adopted a national safe systems strategy in an effort to reduce the deaths, including more than \$800 million in grants to help communities with projects in high-crash areas, NHTSA said in a statement.

Estimates from the agency generally are close to the final numbers, which for 2022 will be released next spring. In releasing statistics for

2021 earlier this month, NHTSA said speeding and impaired or distracted driving are on the rise.

Data showed a 12% increase in fatal crashes involving at least one distracted driver, with 3,522 people killed. That prompted the agency to kick off a \$5 million advertising campaign in an effort to keep drivers focused on the road. Agency officials said such cases likely are under-reported by police.

The number of pedestrians killed rose 13%, and cyclist fatalities were up 2% for the year. The number of unbelted passengers killed rose 8.1%, while fatalities



Traffic moves along the Interstate 76 highway on March 31, 2021, in Philadelphia.

Associated Press

involving alcohol-impaired driving were up 14%.

Speeding-related deaths increased 7.9%, while crash deaths involving large trucks weighing over 10,000 pounds were up 17%, the agency said.

NHTSA said in a statement

that the fatality rate per 100 million vehicle miles traveled also fell slightly in 2022 to 1.35, down from 1.37 in 2021. People are driving more as the coronavirus pandemic waned, with miles traveled increasing almost 1% over 2021. □

SpaceX giant rocket explodes minutes after launch from Texas

By **MARCIA DUNN**

AP Aerospace Writer

SOUTH PADRE ISLAND, Texas (AP) — SpaceX's giant new rocket exploded minutes after blasting off on its first test flight Thursday and crashed into the Gulf of Mexico.

Elon Musk's company was aiming to send the biggest and most powerful rocket ever built on a round-the-world trip from the southern tip of Texas, near the Mexican border. The nearly 400-foot (120-meter) Starship carried no people or satellites.

SpaceX later said multiple engines on the 33-engine booster were not firing as the rocket ascended, causing it to lose altitude and begin to tumble. The rocket was intentionally destroyed by its self-destruct system, exploding and plummeting into the water.

Instead of a best-case-scenario 1 1/2-hour flight with the spacecraft on top peeling away and taking a lap around the world, the whole thing lasted four minutes. The rocket reached a maximum speed of about 1,300 mph (2,100 kph) and as high as 24 miles (39 kilometers), before going sideways and dropping.

Throng of spectators watched from South Padre Island, several miles away from the Boca Chica Beach launch site, which was off-limits. As Starship lifted off with a thunderous roar, the crowd screamed: "Go, baby, go!"



SpaceX's Starship launches from Starbase in Boca Chica, Texas, Thursday, April 20, 2023.

Associated Press

Musk, in a tweet, called it "an exciting test launch of Starship! Learned a lot for next test launch in a few months." SpaceX termed it a "rapid unscheduled disassembly."

In the weeks leading up to the flight, Musk gave 50-50 odds that the spacecraft would reach orbit. He stressed that clearing the launch tower and not blowing up the pad would be a win.

"You never know exactly what's going to happen," said SpaceX livestream commentator and engineer John Insprucker. "But as we promised, excitement is guaranteed and Starship gave us a rather spectacular end."

At liftoff, the rocket kicked up huge plumes of sand

and dust around the pad. In Port Isabel, about 10 miles (6 kilometers) away, particles covered cars and other surfaces. The only other report, said John Sandoval, assistant to the city manager, was a shattered window at a local business. "Yes, it shook, rattled and rolled," he said of the rocket.

The Federal Aviation Administration said it would oversee the accident investigation, noting that no injuries or public property damage were reported. The agency also said that until it determines that there is no threat to public safety, Starships are grounded.

The SpaceX intends to use Starship to send people and cargo to the moon and, eventually, Mars.

NASA has reserved a Starship for its next moonwalking team, and rich tourists are already booking lunar flybys.

Despite the abbreviated flight, congratulations poured in from NASA chief Bill Nelson and others in the space industry. Retired Canadian astronaut Chris Hadfield tweeted, "Huge accomplishment, huge lessons, onwards to the next attempt."

"It fell somewhere between a small step and their hoped-for giant leap, but it still represents significant progress toward a reusable super-heavy lift rocket," University of Chicago's Jordan Bimm, a space historian, said in an email.

At 394 feet and nearly 17 million pounds of thrust,

Starship easily surpasses NASA's moon rockets past, present and future. NASA successfully launched its new 322-foot (98-meter) moon rocket last November on a test flight, sending the empty Orion capsule around the moon.

The stainless steel Starship rocket is designed to be fully reusable with fast turnaround, dramatically lowering costs, similar to what SpaceX's smaller Falcon rockets have done soaring from Cape Canaveral, Florida. Nothing was to be saved from this test flight, with the spacecraft if all had gone well aiming for a watery grave in the Pacific near Hawaii.

The futuristic spacecraft flew several miles into the air during testing a few years ago, landing successfully only once. But this was the inaugural launch of the first-stage booster with 33 methane-fueled engines.

SpaceX has more boosters and spacecraft lined up for more test flight; the next set is almost ready to go. Musk wants to fire them off in quick succession, so he can start using Starships to launch satellites into low-Earth orbit and then put people on board.

It was the second launch attempt. Monday's try was scrapped by a frozen booster valve.

Jason and Lisa Flores drove down from Corpus Christi to watch the launch with their daughter, and noticed something was amiss. □

5th arrest made in Alabama Sweet 16 birthday party shooting



A makeshift memorial is created at the scene of the fatal shooting at a dance studio in Dadeville, Ala., Wednesday April 19, 2023.

Associated Press

DADEVILLE, Ala. (AP) — A fifth man was arrested Thursday and charged with murder in connection with a shooting at Sweet 16 birthday party that killed four young people in Alabama, authorities announced.

Willie George Brown Jr., 19, of Auburn, is charged with four counts of reckless murder, the Alabama Law Enforcement Agency said.

A total of five defendants are now facing reckless murder charges in connection to the fatal shooting.

The shooting rampage at the Sweet 16 birthday killed four young people, ranging from ages 17 to 23 and shocked the small east Alabama city of Dadeville. In addition to the four slain, 32 others were injured, four of them critically. The party, at a dance studio just off the town square, was in full swing when gunfire erupted.

Tyreese "Ty Reik" McCullough, 17, of Tuskegee and Travis McCullough, 16, of Tuskegee were arrested Tuesday. Wilson LaMar Hill Jr., 20, of Auburn, was arrested Wednesday, and Johnny Letron Brown, 20, of Tuskegee, was arrested Thursday. The district attorney said the teens will be tried as adults as required by Alabama law when anyone 16 or older is charged with murder. □

NATO chief: Ukraine's 'rightful place' is in the alliance

By LORNE COOK and
SAMYA KULLAB

Associated Press

KYIV, Ukraine (AP) — NATO chief Jens Stoltenberg defiantly declared Thursday that Ukraine's "rightful place" is in the military alliance and pledged more support for the country on his first visit to Kyiv since Russia's invasion just over a year ago.

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy urged Stoltenberg, who has been instrumental in marshaling support from NATO members, to push for even more from them, including warplanes, artillery and armored equipment.

The Kremlin has given various justifications for going to war, but repeated Thursday that preventing Ukraine from joining NATO is still a key goal of its invasion, arguing that Kyiv's membership in the alliance would pose an existential threat to Russia.

NATO leaders said in 2008 that Ukraine would join the alliance one day, and Stoltenberg has repeated that promise throughout the war, though the organization has established no pathway or timetable for membership.

"Let me be clear, Ukraine's rightful place is in the Euro-Atlantic family," Stoltenberg told a news confer-



NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg left, talks during a joint press conference with Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy in Kyiv, Ukraine, Thursday, April 20, 2023.

Associated Press

ence. "Ukraine's rightful place is in NATO."

Zelenskyy said he was grateful for an invitation to a NATO summit in July in Vilnius, Lithuania, but said his country needs a roadmap for becoming a member.

"The time has come for the (alliance's) leaders to define the prospects of Ukraine's acquisition of NATO membership, to define the algorithm of Ukraine's movement towards this goal, and to define security guarantees for our state for the period of such movement that is, for the period before NATO

membership," he said.

Stoltenberg said he and Zelenskyy discussed a NATO support program for Ukraine.

"This will help you transition from Soviet-era equipment and doctrines to NATO standards and ensure full interoperability with the alliance," Stoltenberg said. "NATO stands with you today, tomorrow and for as long as it takes."

He noted an announcement Thursday by Denmark and the Netherlands that they plan to provide Ukraine with at least another 14 refurbished Leopard 2

battle tanks by early 2024. He added that he expected countries to "make new announcements of concrete military support to Ukraine" at a meeting Friday in Germany.

The fighting in recent months has become a war of attrition, with neither side able to gain momentum. But Ukraine has recently received sophisticated weapons from its Western allies and is expected to launch a counteroffensive in coming weeks.

Russian President Vladimir Putin has warned that Moscow could use "all means

available" a phrase some see as a threat to use nuclear weapons in response to an attack on its territory if Ukraine attempts to recapture Moscow-occupied areas.

NATO has no official presence in Ukraine and provides only nonlethal support to Kyiv, but Stoltenberg has been the strong voice of the alliance throughout the war.

A procession of international leaders has made the journey to Kyiv over the last year, and the former Norwegian prime minister is one of the last major Western figures to do so.

NATO, formed to counter the Soviet Union, has long feared being dragged into a wide war with nuclear-armed Russia. But as the West has moved from hesitantly providing helmets and uniforms to tanks, warplanes and advanced missile systems, high-level visits have become routine.

Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said Thursday that preventing Ukraine from joining NATO remains one of the goals of what Moscow calls its "special military operation." Speaking in a conference call with reporters, Peskov said that Ukraine's accession would pose a "serious, significant threat to our country, to our country's security." □

Dutch salvage team set to pump oil off rusting Yemen tanker

By MIKE CORDER

Associated Press

AMSTERDAM (AP) — A Dutch salvage company has reached agreement with the United Nations to pump oil from a rusting tanker off the coast of war-ravaged Yemen in a move hailed as a "critical milestone" in moves to avert a possible environmental disaster, its parent company announced Thursday.

Boskalis said that its Smit Salvage subsidiary has reached agreement with the U.N. Development Program to transfer more than one million barrels of oil from the decaying tanker

FSO Safer. A specialist support ship, the Ndeavor, is setting sail Friday to the east African nation of Djibouti to prepare for the mission, the company said.

The announcement came just over a month after the U.N. said it had signed an agreement to buy a very large vessel that can hold oil pumped off the Safer.

The Japanese-made Safer was built in the 1970s and sold to the Yemeni government in the 1980s to store up to 3 million barrels of oil pumped from fields in Marib, a province in eastern Yemen. With the impoverished Arab Peninsula coun-

try engulfed for years in civil war, no annual maintenance has been carried out on the ship, which is 360 meters (1,181 feet) long with 34 storage tanks, since 2015. In 2020, internal documents obtained by The Associated Press showed that seawater has entered Safer's engine compartment, causing damage to pipes and increasing the risk of sinking. Rust has covered parts of the tanker and the inert gas that prevents the tanks from gathering inflammable gases has leaked out. UNDP Administrator Achim Steiner called the agreement with Bos-

kalis "another critical milestone of the 'Stop Red Sea

Spill' operation to transfer oil" from the FSO Safer. □



United Nations Development Programme Administrator Achim Steiner speaks to reporters during a news conference, Thursday, March 9, 2023 at U.N. headquarters.

Associated Press

Japan PM denounces attack, vows security review before G7

By MARI YAMAGUCHI

Associated Press

TOKYO (AP) — Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida denounced a pipe bomb attack at a campaign event he attended last weekend and pledged to review security procedures to ensure safety for dignitaries visiting the country for the Group of Seven summit he will host in May.

"No matter what the reason is, the use of violence to shut down free speech should never be tolerated," Kishida told selected media from G-7 countries on Thursday at the Prime Minister's Office, as he stressed that the attack occurred during a nationwide local election campaign.

"The election, which is the foundation of democracy, should not succumb to violence.

We must carry out the election until the end," he said, explaining why he has continued to deliver speeches since the attack on Saturday.

A man hurled a pipe bomb at Kishida at the fishing port of Saikazaki in the western prefecture of Wakayama just before he was to make a campaign speech for a local candidate from his governing party. The moment the explosive fell near



Japan's Prime Minister Fumio Kishida speaks during an interview with foreign media members at the Prime Minister's official residence Thursday, April 20, 2023, in Tokyo.

Associated Press

him, he was pushed away by special police and evacuated unhurt before the bomb exploded.

The alleged attacker, Ryuji Kimura, 24, was wrestled to the ground and arrested on the spot.

The attack, which targeted the prime minister less than a year after former leader Shinzo Abe's assassination, raised questions about whether any lessons had been learned from Abe's case, especially as Japan navigates key events like

the ongoing elections and G-7 meetings.

"As we prepare to welcome many guests from around the world for the G-7 summit and other events, I feel it is very important to once again review our security measures so that our guests can visit Japan with a sense of safety," Kishida said.

During the May 19-21 summit in his electoral constituency of Hiroshima the target of the world's first atomic attack Kishida

plans to appeal for nuclear disarmament, while pledging support for the rules-based international order and vowing to play a greater role as the only Asian member of the G-7 to bridge Western economies with the so-called Global South nations. He will also demand that Russia stop the war on Ukraine immediately.

"I feel our path toward achieving a world without nuclear weapons has become an increasingly diffi-

cult one," said Kishida, who has made the goal his career aim. "But that makes our cause more important than ever, and we must keep raising the flag of the ideal to achieve a nuclear-free world and reverse the ongoing trend. To do so is a responsibility Japan bears to human society as the world's only country to have suffered nuclear attacks."

He said Russia's war on Ukraine has raised fears the same could happen in Asia, and he said calls for a rules-based international order, along with the rejection of one-sided change to the status quo, could be widely accepted.

"It is extremely important for the G-7 to reaffirm the basic position, and it could help the international community to unite in case a situation like this happens in places other than Russia and Europe," he said.

Violent crimes are rare in Japan.

With its strict gun control laws, the country has only a handful of gun-related crimes annually, most of them gang related. But in recent years Japanese police have worried about "lone offender" attacks with homemade guns and explosives. □

Stampede in Yemen at Ramadan charity event kills at least 78

By AHMED AL-HAJ and SAMY MAGDY

Associated Press

SANAA, Yemen (AP) — A crowd apparently panicked by gunfire and an electrical explosion stampeded at an event to distribute financial aid during the Muslim holy month of Ramadan in Yemen's capital late Wednesday, killing at least 78 people and injuring at least 73 others, according to witnesses and Houthi rebel officials.

The tragedy was Yemen's deadliest in years that was not related to the country's long-running war, and came ahead of the Muslim holiday of Eid al-Fitr, which marks the end of Rama-

dan later this week. Armed Houthis fired into the air in an attempt at crowd control, apparently striking an electrical wire and causing it to explode, according

to two witnesses, Abdel-Rahman Ahmed and Yahia Mohsen. That sparked a panic, and people, including many women and children, began stampeding,

they said. Video posted on social media showed dozens of bodies, some motionless, and others screaming as people tried to help. Separate footage of the aftermath released by Houthi officials showed bloodstains, shoes and victims' clothing scattered on the ground. Investigators were seen examining the area.

The crush took place in the Old City in the center of Sanaa, where hundreds of poor people had gathered for a charity event organized by merchants, according to the Houthi-run Interior Ministry.

People had gathered to receive about \$10 each from

a charity funded by local businessmen, witnesses said. Wealthy people and businessmen often hand out cash and food, especially to the poor, during Ramadan. Interior Ministry spokesperson Brig. Abdel-Khaleq al-Aghri, blamed the crush on the "random distribution" of funds without coordination with local authorities.

Motaher al-Marouni, a senior health official, said 78 people were killed, according the rebels' Al-Masirah satellite TV channel. At least 73 others were injured and taken to the al-Thowra Hospital in Sanaa, according to hospital deputy director Hamdan Bagheri. □



This image released by ANSAR ALLAH HOUTHY MEDIA OFFICE, shows the aftermath of a deadly stampede in Sanna, Yemen Wednesday, April 19, 2023.

Associated Press

The Bethany Chapel Foundation and Youth Clergy Aruba celebrates King's Day next week



(Oranjestad)—The Bethany Chapel Foundation and Youth Clergy Aruba are collaborating to organize activities for the celebration of King's Day on April 27th. With these activities, they hope to collect funding for Youth Clergy Aruba, so that they could participate at the global conference of Pope Francis in Portugal this coming June.

Suzette Kelly-Boekhoudt, who volunteers at the Bethany Chapel Foundation, explained in a press conference yesterday that for King's Day, they are organizing their "family fair", which opens at 10am and closes at 4pm. This fair is also related to the 65th anniversary celebration of the Imeldahof Convent building and the 65th consecration of the Bethany Chapel.

Youth Clergy Aruba, which consist of a group of young boys and girls who are currently working very hard to achieve their dream of traveling to Portugal and to represent Aruba at the international conference of Pope Francis.

Coordinator of Youth Clergy Aruba, Reginald Winklaar, expressed their happiness to be able to organize this fair with the Bethany Chapel Foundation for collecting funds for their trip to the European continent. This conference summons all young people of the world to meet with Pope Francis: "It is the biggest event of the Catholic Church," Winklaar expressed.

Furthermore, he told a bit of history, saying that in 1983, Pope John Paul held a big service in Rome and was surprised to see so many young people participating. From that day on, the idea for a service for young people came into fruition, and in 1984, the first service took place, called

"You Believe". In 1986, he changes the name to "World Youth Day" in Rome and in 1987, the church held their first World Youth Day service in Brazil.

From that day too, Aruba has been sending delegations of young people to the service. This year, they are preparing to participate in this event from July 21st to August 8th in Portugal. It is for this reason that the youth clergy of Aruba has been collecting funds since last year: "We are talking about a huge sum of money; almost 5,500 florins per person. The total sum adds up to approximately 176,000 florins. This is why we wanted to ask the community of Aruba for their help," Winklaar explained.

Sidney Tromp from the Youth Clergy of the Our Lady of Fatima Parish in Dakota said that they will be joining Youth Clergy Aruba at the conference. He state that the members of the youth clergy of the parish will be the Bethany Chapel on April 27th due to the fact that they have two activities planned for this day.

The first activity is a walk-a-thon in the Noord neighborhood, starting from 7am with Zumba. The walk-a-thon begins and ends at the Bethany Chapel. Afterwards, the family fair takes place on the chapel grounds, where the young boys and girls of the delegation will be entertaining the children of the Aruban community: "All families all welcome."

On this day, the members of the delegation will be selling 10-florin tickets that include traditional games, food and drinks. Entrance is free. □

Minister Wever presented at the Economics of Mutuality work shop



(Oranjestad)—Recently, Minister Geoffrey Wever (Economic Relations) had the honor to open the Economics of Mutuality work shop at the University of Aruba, with the participation of merchants. Companies have been under pressure to incorporate sustainable practices. "To create value" has to be based on benefits to create solutions for human being and the environment, and not just for financial benefits.

The Business Leaders Shape Society Now and in the Future work shop forms part of a program dedicated to Economics of Mutuality. Economics of Mutuality is an innovation in the field of management and investing to guide organizations in their transition to create a bigger value for human beings and the environment, and even more profit. This is a "win-win" situation for everyone; a mutual benefit for all stakeholders.

In 2019, Aruba's economy was 8.3 times bigger than the economy back in 1986, based on measurements of nominal value. However, if we look at the nominal value of the economy divided between each citizen—Gross Domestic Product per capita, this was 4.5 times bigger in 2019 than

in 1986. This is less than the economy growth.

In terms of the real value of the economy, of the average quality of life, this was 2.5 times bigger in 2019 compared to 1986—so there are huge differences. This shows that even though the economy of Aruba is growing, the average quality of life for our citizen is still low. Since 2000, the development of the true Gross Domestic Product per capita or the quality of life remains stagnant.

In light of the need and urgency for a sustainable economic model, Minister Geoffrey Wever provided information to the participants who have made a "National Action Plan 2023-2025 Aruba's Transition to a Sustainable and Inclusive Economic Model". Recently, this has been approved by the Minister Council and has been presented in Parliament on March 30th of this year. This has also been published to the public.

It is important to bring the discussion that we cannot keep developing our economy in the same way we have been doing for the last 32 years of the official figures show that the quality of life of our citizens is negatively affected □

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Paseo Herencia is always fun and exciting to visit



NOORD— Paseo Herencia offers a variety of shopping, dining and entertainment options in an outdoor center located in the heart of Palm Beach – walking distance from the high-rise hotels.

Shopping

The Paseo Herencia stores offer a great collection in beach wear, clothing, perfume, shoes, jewelry, souvenirs and much more. Pamper yourself by visiting Maggy's and enjoy their salon services and shop for your favorite beauty products. Aruba Aloe has that perfect gift to bring back home, all made with natural ingredients. Other brand favorites are Tommy Hilfiger, Calvin Klein, Aldo, Carmen Steffens, Nike store, Pandora and many more.

Restaurants

Start with a breakfast meal at Paseo Herencia offering unique breakfast options such as Drunk's Denial with their Make it Your Own Crêpe Bar offering sweet and savory crêpe flavors and the option to booze it up with their Mimosa crêpe (mandarin soaked in champagne), Pina Colada (pineapples in coconut rum), Bourbon Apple, Brandy Apricot, Whiskey Pear and more. Location can be found by following the bakery smell upon arrival. Another option is Seabarita offering you delicious breakfast options ranging from Huevos Rancheros to empanadas surrounded by a cozy picnic setting with streetside view. Go Argentinian style at Che Bar and try their delicious omelet with chorizo/ham, mozzarella, onions, peppers, and tomatoes served with skillet potatoes and toast. Looking for something for the whole family? Visit TGI Fridays and choose between waffle, omelets, breakfast sandwiches and tacos starting at \$8. These restaurants are also open



for lunch & dinner offering you a variety of cuisine choices. If you're looking for more unique concepts, join us for dinner at Xixon Restaurant greatly known in Miami for their Spanish inspired dishes with top notch flavors and the largest wine variety or visit The Lazy Turtle and try their exotic African dish "Kuvuta Kuku" accompanied by their tasty lazy cocktails. Coming for drinks? Sip and have a good time at the Bulldog Aruba located in the center of the Plaza. Open till late.

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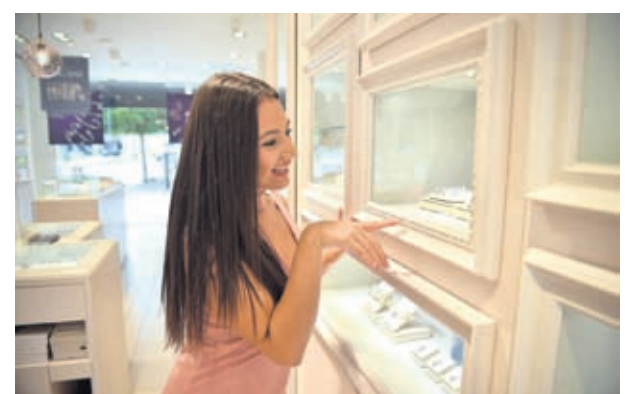
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Aruba Tourism Authority honored a loyal visitor at Casa Del Mar Beach Resort

The Aruba Tourism Authority recently had the great pleasure to recognize a Distinguished Visitor of Aruba. This visitor was respectfully honored with a certificate acknowledging his years of visits, loyalty, and love to the island of Aruba.

The honor certification is presented on behalf of the Minister of Tourism as a token of appreciation and to say "Masha Danki" to guests whom have visited Aruba 10, 20, or 35 years or more consecutively.

The three honoring levels are as follows:

Distinguished Visitor
(10>years consecutively visiting Aruba)
Goodwill Ambassador
(20>years consecutively visiting Aruba)
Emerald Ambassador
(35>years consecutively visiting Aruba)

The honoree was:

Distinguished Visitor of Aruba
Tyler Braden from Wisconsin, United States.

Young boy Tyler has been visiting the island with his family since he was only 6 weeks old, and today we mark his 10th consecutive visit to Aruba!

It is extremely pleasant to witness how families all gather together and bring their kids, and in some cases, grandchildren along so they can see why their families fell in love with Aruba in the first place and still yearn to visit the island after all these years.

Ms. Kimberley Richardson representing the Aruba Tourism Authority, and staff members of the Casa Del Mar Beach Resort bestowed the Distinguished Visitor Certification to the honoree, presented him with gifts, and also expressed gratitude to his family for bringing young Tyler along with them to Aruba since he was a baby for so many consecutive years.

Top reasons for returning to Aruba, provided by Tyler were:
Ocean & sunshine
The iguanas all around the Casa Del Mar Beach Resort
The delicious mudslides
Family fun
Being able to build sandcastles on the beach ☐



beauty & THE BEACH

Aruba Today is delighted to share to its readers a new segment called "Beauty and the Beach", where we take a minute to honor our guests who have decided to spend their vacation on our beautiful and warm island.

In this edition, we'd like to give a shout out to **Juan and Barbara from Argentina**. It's their second time here and the love the beaches, the familiarity and the security. Aruba is always proud to host all families and guests. We at Aruba Today encourage any visitor of the island to send in their pictures and/or messages; who knows? You might get on the cover!

This segment is sponsored by Alhambra Casino and Shops.

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Don't forget to visit Aruba's famous Red Anchor

At the south east coast of the island, standing alone on a windswept and barren land stands a popular Aruba landmark – a large anchor. It overlooks the sea just beyond, watching over the shipping lanes. It stands there in memory and in honor of all seamen who have lost their life at sea.

Where to Find the Anchor?

The anchor is a "must see" landmark when you visit Aruba. It is among the most photographed historical landmarks for the island. You want to make sure you add this stop on your itinerary when your visiting the south coast of Aruba. The bright red anchor against the backdrop of the deep blue Caribbean sea and the azure blue skies, make a great backdrop for your vacation pictures.

The anchor is located at the entrance to Gate 6 to the former Lago Colony. It is on the outskirts of Seroe Colorado, on the south east point of the island at the "T" junction to Baby Beach. Depending on where you are staying on the island,

follow the signs that indicate the way to Baby Beach. Once you reach the T-junction, it will be right in front of you.

About the Anchor Size

It will be hard to miss the anchor, it's huge! The anchor that weighs 21,772 kilos, is approximately 10 feet 6 inches wide and 15 feet, 6 inches tall.

On the anchor there are some numbers. The 4112 and 4115, which are believed to be the serial numbers that refer to the "fluke" or horizontal and vertical parts of the anchor, respectively. The number 21772K refers to the weight of the anchor in kilos.

This type of anchor was manufactured by Hoesch Dortmund Horde, at a foundry located in Germany.

Where did the Anchor Come From?

There are a number of stories as to the origins of the anchor, which one do you think it was? (Unfortunately the mystery has never been solved, so your imagination can pick which one you think it might be!)

Story 1:

"According to Mr. Manuel M. Curiel, an ex-Lago Tug Captain, a fully laden VLCC (Very Large Crude Carrier) was seeking a mooring at the 15-mile anchorage, known as Bara, on the southern part of the island. This is the usual shallow mooring location for ships awaiting orders, etc. The weather was rough with strong current. The normal procedure is that they would walk out three shackles (about 90 feet) until the anchor touches the bottom while the chain must rest on the bottom. Subsequently, they will walk out some extra shackles and when the ship starts to swing or lean on one side, the anchor is properly set. Because of the rough weather, unfortunately they did not get the time to walk out the extra tackles and because of the tension exerted on the winch, it broke, and they lost the anchor and its chain."

Story 2:

"Mr. Curiel also said that at one time a small tanker with a Korean crew, while lifting their anchor also lift-

ed another anchor near the inner harbor. When the ship asked for assistance, he went with his tugboat along with a barge, to help. But eventually they had to cut the chain and let the anchor go to the bottom because they could not untangle them."

How Did The Anchor Become a Landmark?

Sometime between 1980 and 1985, three gentlemen (Mr. Wim Martinus – the Harbormaster of Aruba; Mr. August Genser – the ex-Division Superintendent of Lago's Laboratory; and Mr. Willie Davis – Owner of Filtec at Zeewijk in San Nicolas), were having a conversation with Mr. Charlie Brouns Jr. at his famous Charlie's Bar and Restaurant in San Nicolas. Charlie, who was a visionary and had dreams for developing the San Nicolas area, told these gentlemen that he would like to come up with something innovative for the San Nicolas area to draw tourism to the area.

The "anchor", which at that time was being stored at the Oranjestad harbor, was suggested as an option.

Charlie liked the idea! He then contacted the President of Lago for permission to acquire the anchor. He was granted permission and the anchor was then relocated to its present location and dedicated "To All Seamen" on the occasion of the closing of the Lago Oil Refinery on March 31, 1985.

Through the Years

Through the years the Anchor was slowly weathering from the wind and salt. As time passed, sadly the origin and purpose of the anchor slowly faded away from people's memories.

After Charles Brouns Jr died on September 15, 2004, his friend Mr. Sam Speziale, requested assistance from the management of Valero Aruba Refinery to help maintain the monument. The Valero Aruba Refinery, graciously sandblasted and painted the anchor and poured a concrete pad around it. On April 17, 2005, the anchor monument was rededicated "To All Seamen" in a formal ceremony in memory of Charles Brouns Jr.

Today, the anchor stands both as memorial to all seaman who have lost their lives at sea, but also as a silent reminder that Seroe Colorado is part of San Nicolas and that San Nicolas is still a vibrant and important part of the island of Aruba.

The Best Time to Visit

When your planning your visit to the south end of the island, you will want to include in your itinerary the many things to see and do there. The anchor will be just one of these stops, (keep an eye out for our future editions, we publish our recommendations!).

With that being said, I have to say, if you enjoy catching a sunrise, the anchor is one of the best places on the island to catch the sunrise. But in reality, anytime is a good time to visit, depending on your personal schedule. ☐



Gershwin Lee: a headmaster who is more like a coach for his students

The teacher as well as the student are people, and before everything, must be seen as people. That is the philosophy of Gershwin Lee, headmaster of the MAVO school, Colegio San Antonio.

Lee had just finished supervising a 'strafmiddag' – afternoon detention – when he spoke with our reporter. A group of students unhappy that they had to spend a Friday afternoon at school is not exactly an ideal situation, but the headmaster doesn't let any opportunity go by without connecting with his students. "They feel that the teacher doesn't like them, they told me. Many times it is a teacher who gave them a low grade." And what Lee told them was that by getting lower grades, the children reinforce the bad impression that the teacher might have of them, but the negative consequences fall on them.

He knew of which teacher the kids were talking, someone who has an interest but follows a stricter line. When the headmaster asked the kids why they don't make an effort, the answer was that "I don't want the teacher to think that I'm a teacher's pet". In that moment, Lee gave them a challenge, to ask the teacher directly if he thinks they have a perspective. "I told them that they will be surprised by the answer, because I'm sure that the teacher will say that he does believe in them, as long as they apply themselves."

After the conversation, Lee let the kids watch the documentary about gymnast Simone Byles, who despite having addicts as parents who couldn't give attention to their child; she was adopted by her grandparents. "The difference is the mindset. The idea was for the children to realize that trauma doesn't need to be an obstacle.



Everyone has trauma. A child who gets screamed at by a teacher when he was in first grade because he couldn't read well will be left with trauma. The point is how you deal with trauma."

Perhaps the most surprising aspect is that Gershwin Lee told the students that he also experienced a challenging youth. His father, the late Atan Lee was an extremely strict parent who didn't hesitate to use physical discipline and demanded perfection at school from his children. Gershwin as the older of three would rebel. His grades in MAVO were nothing to be proud of, and his rebellion continued until after finishing HBO (Dutch equivalent to college). His father dreamed of his son receiving the title 'drs', and Lee got all the way to his thesis and then decided not to do it. He informed his father, who was obviously disappointed, and then moved to Spain where he obtained his Masters in Business Administration with specialization in marketing and public relations.

The trajectory however made Lee realize why his father was so fo-

cused on his children's achievements. "My father grew up poor in a big family. A male child of Chinese heritage, who was a victim of bullying, managed to overcome and wanted the best for his children. He couldn't believe it himself how much he achieved. No one believed in him when he was a child."

The realization that his father's demands were the result of trauma allowed Gershwin to accept that the disciplinarian was simply a father who loved him and wanted the best for him.

And these stories, Lee tells them to the students of Colegio San Antonio. This however does not mean that it's not necessary to recognize the difficulty that some students are going through, because often, the attitude and arrogance of some students hides the lack of a parent's love, or the fact that the family is poor. Such attitudes are reflected in the results, and sometimes parents have a hard time understanding this. Gershwin applies the same human approach with the parents, some of whom sometimes come to school very angry.

From the start, ever since he was a teacher, Gershwin noticed that the best way to see the student, the parent, or the colleague is first as a person, holistically. For this reason also it is important for Gershwin to have personal contact with parents, to really get to know them. And he asks all of them the same question: "How was your day yesterday? How are you this morning, what did you have to eat?" This way of showing interest tears down walls and allows him to come closer to people, in order to reach the core of any conflict. A student

(who is not a 'repeat client') who approaches him because the teacher kicked him out of school will not get scolded, but will be approached by a person who wants to know more about the life of the student. "I see what his fears, doubts and complexes are, if he is afraid."

The way in which Gershwin Lee deals with people is thus more like a coach than a strict disciplinarian. He doesn't leave out that there are rules to be followed, but in order to demand adherence, Lee believes it is essential to motivate the student as well as the teacher so that both want to work on improvement.

It might be part of his personality, but Gershwin Lee explains that from early on he realized the importance of a different approach, and he followed all courses and training possible on this area, from Conscious Discipline to yoga, which provide techniques to help anyone breathe in and calm down.

The results can be seen, because Colegio San Antonio already has years on top of the list of schools with a better percentage of graduates. But this is not what motivates the headmaster. "If you take the first exam period from last year, our school was the one with the worst results. There was the possibility for every student to drop their lowest grade (an arrangement due to the pandemic) and still graduate. But I told them to still take the second chance exam and improve their grade."

The headmaster motivated his students to believe in themselves and assured them that they will graduate. The result of the school in itself was not important for Lee. Rather, his objective was for the students to grow and realize their potential and be happy people, an approach that is proven to work. □



CROSSWORD

By THOMAS JOSEPH

- ACROSS**
- 37 Birdie beater
 - 1 Pottery piece
 - 6 Dentist's story
 - 40 Stop directive
 - 11 State game
 - 42 Debussy work
 - 12 Western spread
 - 43 Brat's opposite
 - 13 Devoured
 - 44 Squalid
 - 14 Spare
 - 45 Slender
 - 15 "That's gross!"
 - DOWN**
 - 1 Gumshoe
 - 2 Sub
 - 3 Nevertheless
 - 4 Numbered rd.
 - 5 Gives
 - 6 Set loose
 - 7 Not strict
 - 24 Pharaoh symbols
 - 25 Freud's home
 - 27 Idiotic
 - 29 Carpentry tool
 - 32 Genesis name
 - 33 Bashful pal
 - 34 Historic time
 - 35 Director's cry
 - 36 Historic time

REMAP	HAZEL
AROMA	EXILE
WAVER	LEGIT
ENAMEL	
OLD PIN	PEP
LOOSEN	DAME
INVITED	DOVER
VEEP	ROGERS
ERR	JAM DYE
CALICO	
AESOP	NAVAL
LAURA	OPERA
PREEN	STREW

Yesterday's answer

- 8 In agreement
- 28 Throat dangles
- 9 Pinch
- 30 Made blank
- 10 Gumshoe
- 31 Almost never
- 17 Disney's Pumbaa
- 33 Supermarket
- 23 Ricketty section
- 39 Sleep site
- 24 Target
- 41 Hydrocarbon suffix
- 26 Indy auto
- 27 Model stickers

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
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44						45			

A XYDLBAA XR
is LONGFELLOW

One letter stands for another. In this sample, A is used for the three L's, X for the two O's, etc. Single letters, apostrophes, the length and formation of the words are all hints. Each day the code letters are different.

4-21

CRYPTOQUOTE

X J B C W R N M C . B C W D L

T X H C X L D B N K T Y N J

W N F J N K U X L Q X T T A M X N L .

— L N D F W R N F M O E

Yesterday's Cryptoquote: NOTHING WILL TURN A MAN'S HOME INTO A CASTLE MORE QUICKLY AND EFFECTIVELY THAN A DACHSHUND. — QUEEN VICTORIA

Relief options if you're in debt from your kid's education

By ELIZA HAVERSTOCK of NerdWallet

In January, the Department of Education unveiled details of a repayment plan overhaul that could halve monthly payments for many federal student loan borrowers. But one group, the 3.7 million parents who owe parent PLUS loans, won't benefit. Policymakers have long excluded parent PLUS loans from most relief, though the program looks much different today than it did during its 1980 debut.

While parent PLUS loans were initially intended as a tool for well-off families, says Robert Kelchen, a higher education professor at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville, they've increasingly become the loan of last resort for lower-income families. Parents, who can borrow up to the total cost of attendance per child (minus other federal aid) with PLUS loans, use the loans to fill funding gaps after their student hits the borrowing limit of no more than \$7,500 per year from the government.

Parent PLUS loans come with higher interest rates and higher origination fees than undergraduate federal student loans, further accelerating the debt pileup. In total, parent PLUS loan borrowers have racked up \$108.5 billion in loans more than \$29,000 per borrower on average. These are intergenerational debts," says Alpha Taylor, a staff attorney at the National Consumer Law Center in Washington, D.C., focused on student loans. "The parents have their own student loans, so



In this June 27, 2020, file photo, Saltillo High School seniors make their way to the football field as the sun begins to set for their graduation ceremony in Saltillo, Miss.

Associated Press

they have their own debt that they're carrying. And on top of that, they're carrying their children's debt, and the children are also in debt." Though the latest payment plan overhaul won't help, there are other options to get debt relief for parent PLUS loans.

PERMANENT FEDERAL RELIEF PROGRAMS

INCOME-CONTINGENT REPAYMENT

An income-driven repayment plan extends your loan term, can lower your monthly payments and can lead to forgiveness. Four income-driven repayment plans are available for federal student loans, but parent PLUS loan borrowers are eligible for only the Income-Contingent Repayment plan. Payments are capped at 20% of a borrower's monthly discretionary income for 25 years. Any remaining debt is forgiven after that time. You must consolidate your parent PLUS loans before

you can sign up for an Income-Contingent Repayment plan.

PUBLIC SERVICE LOAN FORGIVENESS

Parents who work for non-profits and government sectors may qualify for the Public Service Loan Forgiveness program, which forgives remaining debt after a decade of repayment. Borrowers must consolidate their parent PLUS loan into a direct loan and sign up for Income-Contingent Repayment before applying for PSLF.

The parent who originally took out the loan not the child who benefited from the loan must work for a qualifying employer.

DEFERMENT OR FORBEARANCE

Payments on all federal student loans are expected to resume this summer, but borrowers can still request payment pauses known as deferment or forbearance if they face financial hardships.

Consider other relief options first: Interest will accumulate during these pauses, and it will be added to your principal loan balance once payments restart. "You can have a situation where you're spending more time paying off interest than paying down the principal," Taylor cautions. □

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Twitter begins removing blue checks from users who don't pay

By BARBARA ORTUTAY
AP Technology Writer
This time it's for real.

Many of Twitter's high-profile users are losing the blue check marks that helped verify their identity and distinguish them from impostors on the Elon Musk-owned social media platform.

After several false starts, Twitter began making good on its promise Thursday to remove the blue checks from accounts that don't pay a monthly fee to keep them. Twitter had about 300,000 verified users under the original blue-check system many of them journalists, athletes and public figures. The checks began disappearing from these users' profiles late morning Pacific Time. High-profile users who lost their blue checks Thursday included Beyonce, Pope Francis and former President Donald Trump.

The costs of keeping the marks range from \$8 a month for individual web users to a starting price of \$1,000 monthly to verify an organization, plus \$50 monthly for each affiliate or employee account. Twitter does not verify the individual accounts to ensure they are who they say they are, as was the case with the previous blue check doled out during the platform's pre-Musk administration.

Celebrity users, from basketball star LeBron James to Star Trek's William Shatner, have balked at joining although on Thursday, James's blue check indicated that the account paid for verification. Seinfeld actor Jason Alexander pledged to leave the platform if Musk takes his blue check away.

"The way Twitter is going anyone could be me now. The verification system is an absolute mess," Dionne Warwick tweeted Tuesday. She had earlier vowed not to pay for Twitter Blue, saying the monthly fee "could (and will) be going toward



The Twitter splash page is seen on a digital device, on April 25, 2022, in San Diego.

Associated Press

my extra hot lattes."

On Thursday, Warwick lost her blue check.

After buying Twitter for \$44 billion in October, Musk has been trying to boost the struggling platform's revenue by pushing more people to pay for a premium subscription. But his move also reflects his assertion that the blue verification marks have become an undeserved or "corrupt" status symbol for elite personalities, news reporters and others granted verification for free by Twitter's previous leadership.

Twitter began tagging profiles with a blue check mark starting about 14 years ago. Along with

shielding celebrities from impersonators, one of the main reasons was to provide an extra tool to curb misinformation coming from accounts impersonating people. Most "legacy blue checks," including the accounts of politicians, activists and people who suddenly find themselves in the news, as well as little-known journalists at small publications around the globe, are not household names.

One of Musk's first product moves after taking over Twitter was to launch a service granting blue checks to anyone willing to pay \$8 a month. But it was quickly inundated by impostor

accounts, including those impersonating Nintendo, pharmaceutical company Eli Lilly and Musk's businesses Tesla and SpaceX, so Twitter had to temporarily suspend the service days after its launch. □



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Film Review: Little Richard biopic celebrates a rock pioneer

By **MARK KENNEDY**

AP Entertainment Writer

The king of rock 'n' roll didn't die at Graceland in 1977. He died just three years ago in Tullahoma, Tennessee, and he never really got the crown he deserved.

That's the persuasive case made by Lisa Cortés' documentary "Little Richard: I Am Everything," an insightful biography of an unlikely hero who emerged in the buttoned-down Eisenhower era.

Cortés argues that Little Richard created the template for the rock icon and she's got the receipts, tracing his musical and stylistic influences through everyone from the Beatles to David Bowie, Elton John and Lizzo. If there was a king, he was it.

"Sorry, y'all. It wasn't Elvis," contributor Billy Porter notes dryly.

Appropriate for a member of rock royalty, Little Richard was a personal mess. He alternated from flamboyant, orgy-attending, shirtless singer to reserved Christian fundamentalist who declared rock was "devil's music." This film drives directly into the contradiction.

We go from Richard Penniman's poor home in Macon, Georgia, as one of 12 kids, getting his minister father's disapproval for being different and later, of



This image released by Magnolia Pictures shows Little Richard from the documentary "Little Richard: I Am Everything."

course, approval once his son was making money to his rise as the under-celebrated architect of rock. But Cortés' film is also the story of American rock itself, the way transistor radios allowed teens in the '50s to rebel against their parents' staid music and how Black music was appropriated by white bands. Little Richard arguably suffered the most his howl absorbed, his piano-pounding adopted, his androgynous look swiped. "The system didn't like it," he says in an old interview. "I was not supposed to be

the hero for their kids." Instead, he was covered and erased by Pat Boone and Elvis. The film includes new tributes by scholars and fellow artists like Mick Jagger, Nona Hendryx, Nile Rodgers, Tom Jones and director John Waters, who says that his pencil-thin mustache is a "twisted tribute" to Little Richard.

Cortés leans into the analogy of Little Richard as a meteor arriving a comet, a quasar, a Big Bang, his DNA everywhere. She celebrates the oddity that one of rock's greatest pioneers

in the pre-Civil Rights era was a Black, gay man.

His rise was that rare time in America when you could ingratiate yourself to the mainstream by exaggerating your queerness. But below that pompadour and pancake makeup was danger for the status quo. Little Richard was making music that broke down the walls of segregation and celebrated sex, all kinds of sex.

Take his early hit "Tutti Frutti," with its memorable call of "wop-bop-a-loo-bop-a-lop-bam-boom." It started

off as a celebration of anal sex. (Early lyrics were "Tutti Frutti/Good bootie" and "If it's tight/It's alright.") That's right: One of rock's greatest hits began life as what would have then been considered a transgressive record.

A string of hits with double-entendres followed, providing the foundation of rock music: "Lucille," "Keep A Knockin'," "Long Tall Sally" and "Good Golly Miss Molly." That Little Richard could not later feel comfortable in his queerness emerges as a tragedy.

Perhaps the most interesting part of the film is how Little Richard build his own persona. We learn he was part of a drag act early on, and was influenced by Billy Wright 's high pompadour, pencil mustache and thick makeup, as well as Esquerita 's piano-playing style.

To this amalgam, he added the piano stylings of Ike Turner and the singing characteristics of such gospel artists as Marion Williams, Brother Joe May and Clara Ward. With all this star power, the film is also marred somewhat by the filmmakers' use of staged modern-day performances by up-and-coming artists in empty clubs honoring Little Richard, plus the heavy use of swirling star dust as graphic motif, a touch of magical realism that seems unnecessary. □

Associated Press



F. Murray Abraham appears at the 80th annual Golden Globe Awards in Beverly Hills, Calif., on Jan. 10, 2023.

Associated Press

F. Murray Abraham apologizes after 'Mythic Quest' exit

By **The Associated Press**

NEW YORK (AP) — F. Murray Abraham is apologizing after allegations of sexual misconduct led to his departure from the Apple TV+ show "Mythic Quest."

"This is a sincere and deeply felt apology," the actor said in a statement issued Thursday.

"Though never my intention to offend anyone, I told jokes, nothing more, that upset some of my colleagues and as a result lost a great job with wonderful

people. I have grown in my understanding from this experience, and I hope they will forgive me."

The apology comes after a report by Rolling Stone magazine that alleged Abraham was fired from the series following two allegations of misconduct. Lionsgate Television, which produces "Mythic Quest," said Thursday that it had no updates on a previous statement it issued Monday: "We take allegations of misconduct seriously

and investigate them thoroughly. As a matter of corporate policy, we do not comment on personnel actions."

Abraham played the character C.W. Longbottom on "Mythic Quest" during the show's first two seasons, but he was not brought back for the third.

He won an Oscar for his role as Antonio Salieri in the 1984 feature "Amadeus" and starred on the second season of HBO's "The White Lotus." □

Grizzlies' Dillon Brooks trying to get under LeBron's skin

By TERESA M. WALKER

AP Sports Writer

MEMPHIS, Tenn. (AP) —

Calling the NBA's all-time leading scorer — regular season and playoffs — old and just another player might not seem very smart to most folks.

For Dillon Brooks, that's just the Grizzlies' defender trying to get under LeBron James' skin.

Brooks is one of the NBA's best defenders. He started off the mind games before their first-round Western Conference series was locked in, saying he wanted to face James and the Lakers.

And Brooks didn't hold back after his Grizzlies tied this series at 1-1 without Ja Morant. Brooks called James a legend yes, but "old" at 38. He added James isn't the player who won titles in Miami and Cleveland. Brooks, 27, is in the final year of his contract.

"I'm creating a name for myself," Brooks said Wednesday night after a 103-93 win over the Lakers. This is nothing new for Brooks, often called Dillon the Villain in Memphis. He embraces the heel role in a town where wrestling and trash talk is a way to make a good living. It might seem a bit different for someone born in Mississauga, Ontario. But the 6-foot-6 Brooks played high school ball in



Memphis Grizzlies forward Dillon Brooks (24) goes up for a dunk against Los Angeles Lakers forward LeBron James (6) during the first half of Game 2 of a first-round NBA basketball playoff series Wednesday, April 19, 2023, in Memphis, Tenn.

Nevada and was the 45th pick overall out of Oregon in 2017. He was acquired by Memphis from Houston in a draft-night trade.

He's followed in the Memphis tradition of former elite NBA defender Tony Allen during the Grizzlies' franchise-record streak of seven straight playoff berths. He has started 318 of 345 games played in his career. And Brooks has taken on the NBA's best from Kevin Durant to Donovan Mitchell to Stephen Curry backing down from no one.

That's why James, who

spoke to reporters Wednesday night before Brooks called him a "legend" and "old," said before the series started the Lakers couldn't overlook someone who can get hot as a shooter, too. Brooks has a career-high 37 points and had 32 on Dec. 17 against Oklahoma City.

Brooks excels on defense. This season, he held opponents a full 3% under their usual field-goal percentage. That's the NBA's best mark among guards and wing players.

He's at his best against

the NBA's best. Brooks had the league's second-most matchups defensively against All-Stars and led the league by holding those All-Stars to 32.9% shooting. That feisty attitude has come with a literal price. Brooks was fined \$35,000 for shoving a camera person on the sideline while chasing a loose ball in Miami in March, which he apologized for later. He was suspended a game in February for hitting Mitchell in the groin in February, costing him \$78,621 in pay according to Spotrac.com.

Associated Press

Brooks led the NBA in technical fouls with 18, earning a pair of one-game suspensions for surpassing the league threshold for techs. The 18th was the latest in steady increase during the past three seasons.

Golden State fans remain angry that Brooks only got a one-game suspension during the Western Conference semifinals last post-season when Gary Payton II broke his left elbow on a Flagrant 2 foul by Brooks that also got him ejected. Brooks said James called him "dumb" when he picked up his fourth foul. Brooks took that as a win.

"I was expecting him to do that Game 4, Game 5," Brooks said.

Both the Grizzlies and Lakers were unavailable Thursday, traveling to Los Angeles for Game 3 on Saturday night. Brooks made it clear that he enjoys poking "bears," respecting no one until someone scores 40 against him. James scored his most points, with 28 in Game 2 in this series.

So challenge accepted for Brooks, who noted James went at him 1-on-1 and then subbed out.

"If it's LeBron, if it's AD (Anthony Davis), if it's whoever, I play my heart out, so he knows that," Brooks said. "I think most of the NBA knows that and I know my guys know." □

Yanks' Stanton on injuries: 'It's unacceptable this often'

By RONALD BLUM

AP Baseball Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — Sideline with injuries for the 11th time in 14 seasons, Giancarlo Stanton is openly frustrated.

"It's unacceptable this often," he said Thursday, five days after straining his left hamstring during a game against the Minnesota Twins. "The team relies on me and I can't have this continue to happen and put us in a tough spot ... it's my duty and responsibility to be out there."

Stanton was hurt Saturday while pulling into second base with a two-run double

in the seventh inning and went on the injured list the following day.

Yankees manager Aaron Boone estimated Stanton will be sidelined for six weeks.

"It's a tightness. It's a grab," Stanton said. "It's not a normal feeling or a fun one." A five-time All-Star, the 33-year-old has been on the injured list or disabled list seven times in five seasons with the Yankees.

As he spoke to media for the first time since getting hurt, he pinched a cheek with his right hand, then rubbed his hands together. "The disbelief and disap-

pointment at this stage is hard to put into words and kind of comprehend," he said. "It's very frustrating." Stanton missed 223 of 546 games in the previous four seasons because of a strained right biceps and strained posterior cruciate ligament in his right knee (2019), strained left hamstring (2020), strained left quadriceps (2021) and right ankle inflammation and left Achilles tendinitis (2022).

"The one thing I can say in Giancarlo's case is I don't question his professionalism and his commitment to doing all he needs to do to stay healthy and to be

healthy," Boone said. "He feels a responsibility to this team, this organization

to be the great player that he is but to be able to do it more and more often." □



New York Yankees' Giancarlo Stanton hits a two-run double in the seventh inning of a baseball game against the Minnesota Twins, Saturday, April 15, 2023, in New York.

Associated Press

Chess, books, Netflix: Hockey goalies try anything to unplug

By **PAT GRAHAM**
AP Sports Writer

To keep his racing mind in check, Edmonton goaltender Stuart Skinner sometimes turns to the chess board. Anything to unwind and not constantly dwell — even obsess — on stopping shots.

In an effort to escape a bit from their high-pressure jobs, goalies take different approaches. It could be picking up chess (Skinner's move), reading a good book (a novel approach by Colorado's Alexandar Georgiev), bingeing a Netflix show (Carolina's Antti Raanta) or just taking the dog for a walk (Seattle's Philipp Grubauer).

The point is to find a way to slow things down to make sure their dreams aren't haunted by high-speed shots flying at them from the likes of Connor McDavid, Nathan MacKinnon or David Pastrnak.

Because at this time of year, every save — or non-save — takes on greater importance. Replaying the goals in the mind can become an occupational hazard.

"That balance between not being 24/7 hockey is really important for their mental health because they need to learn to manage the stress," explained Aimee Kimball, a mental training consultant who's



Colorado Avalanche goaltender Alexandar Georgiev blocks a Seattle Kraken shot during the second period of Game 1 of a first-round NHL hockey playoff series Tuesday, April 18, 2023, in Denver.

Associated Press

spent 16 seasons working in the NHL and is currently the Washington Capitals' director of organizational development. "If all you ever did was eat, sleep and dream about hockey, then when your career ended, or maybe you had an injury, it's harder to transition into that next phase of life. Having their hobbies, having other interests, is really important not just for now, their playing days, but when their playing days are done."

To forget about facing slapshots, Avalanche goal-

tender Pavel Francouz took up flying the friendly skies. He earned his pilot's license during his playing days in the Czech Republic and it became his ticket to tranquility.

"You realize when you're that high up how small things are," Francouz said. "It gives you a different view on things."

His license, though, has lapsed since moving to Colorado. These days, family time with his young daughter keeps him grounded.

"If you show up at home, she doesn't care if you've

just won or lost. She just loves you the same and wants to play," Francouz said. "That's the best way for me now to just not think about hockey."

Skinner, too, has a young one at home and his son, Beau, provides a welcome distraction from the game. Skinner also began learning chess about a year ago when he was playing in the AHL with the Bakersfield Condors. He saw some of the boys with a board and wanted to take part so he could "find a little bit of calmness."

"I always thought (chess) looked too complicated," Skinner said. "Now I'm just having a blast with it."

Skinner's not looking to be the next Bobby Fischer, just for some mind relief. It's been a game changer.

"A little reset," Skinner said. "Anything besides hockey, just to get your mind off either that save you made or save that you didn't make. Little things like that."

Kimball had a tip for turning it off. "I usually tell them, whenever they change their shoes or their skates, in this situation, change their focus," she said. "If you're either on the ice or off the ice, when you take your shoes off, you're home now. That's a quick, easy way people can transition from one aspect of their life to the other."

Georgiev grabs a novel to get away from hockey. His goal is to read — or listen to — 24 books this year. He's already finished five.

"I've always read so much. But it usually was either newspapers or just wasting time on Reddit or Instagram or listening to a lot of podcasts," Georgiev said. "Then I decided, 'OK, I really want to have a goal and try to finish a few books.' It's like a game. You set a goal for yourself and track your progress. It keeps you accountable and competitive." □



Germany's Alexander Zverev leaves the court after an ATP Tour tennis match against Christopher O'Connell from Australia in Munich, Germany, Thursday, April 20, 2023.

Associated Press

MUNICH (AP) — After waiting an extra day to get on

court at the BMW Open, Alexander Zverev's tour-

Alexander Zverev upset at BMW Open, Holger Rune advances

nament was ended in straight sets by Christopher O'Connell on Thursday as top-seeded Holger Rune won his opening match.

Zverev had a first-round bye and his second-round match with O'Connell was delayed a day after rain washed out most of the Wednesday schedule.

Playing 82nd-ranked O'Connell in cold conditions in front of a German crowd huddled in thick coats, Zverev never built much momentum and struggled to land his first serves as he was defeated

7-6 (2), 6-4.

"It's definitely tough playing Zverev here in front of the home crowd," the 28-year-old Australian said in his on-court interview. "This is the coldest weather I've ever played in. It's tough, took me a while to get warmed up."

O'Connell will play qualifier Flavio Cobolli in the quarterfinals.

Rune secured a spot in the quarterfinals with a 6-3, 6-4 win over Yannick Hanfmann and next plays Chilean clay-court specialist Cristian Garin. Rune is aim-

ing to follow up his strong start to the clay season after he was runner-up to Andrey Rublev in Monaco last week. Garin beat sixth-seeded Lorenzo Sonego 6-3, 7-6 (3).

There were wins too for the second-seeded Taylor Fritz, who beat Marton Fucsovics 4-6, 6-3, 6-3, and fourth-seeded Botik van de Zandschulp, who defeated Aslan Karatsev 6-2, 6-0.

Dominic Thiem's match with Marc-Andrea Huesler was suspended because of darkness. The winner faces Fritz in the quarterfinals. □